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Message Text

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51
ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ITF-05 SSO-00 SR-02 ORM-01 PM-03

NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00

PRS-01 SAM-01 SCA-01 OPR-02 A-01 NSCE-00 AID-05

FDRE-00 /062 W
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R 121001Z MAY 75
FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3272
INFO CINCPAC
CINCPACREPPHIL SUBIC
CDR 13TH AF CLARK

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 6368

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SREF, RP
SUBJECT: ANOTHER FILIPINO VIEW ON EVACUATION

REF: A. MANILA 5361
B. MANILA 5977

SUMMARY: INHOSPITABLE PHILIPPINE REACTION TO REFUGEES, CONTRASTED WITH ULTIMATELY HELPFUL ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES AND U.S., IS ILLUSTRATIVE OF PHILIPPINE DILEMMA OF GOVERNMENT. MID-LEVEL BUREAUCRATS PRIMARILY IN DFA EXPLOITED OPPORTUNITY WHICH IN END HAD TO BE CORRECTED BY MARCOS. PHILIPPINE INHOSPITALITY PROVOKED CRITICAL REACTION AMONG CHURCH, MILITARY AND OPPOSITION. ALTHOUGH REACTION REFLECTED PRO-AMERICAN SENTIMENT TO SOME DEGREE, MORE ENCOURAGING ASPECT WAS STRENGTH OF HUMANITARIAN CONCERN. REACTION STRENGTHENED MARCOS RESOLVE AND ENABLED HIM TO BE RESPONSIVE BOTH TO U.S. INTERESTS AND TO FILIPINO OPINION. END SUMMARY.

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1. TO ALL EXTERNAL APPEARANCES, THE PHILIPPINE REACTION TO THE FLOOD OF INDOCHINA REFUGEES WAS UNCHARACTERISTICALLY

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INHOSPITABLE. IT WAS MANIFESTED IN PANICKY PRONOUNCEMENTS BY ANONYMOUS "SPOKESMEN" REBUFFING THE REFUGEES, THREATENING TO "ARREST" THE MORE PROMINENT, "IMPOUNDING" SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT, AND GENERALLY TURNING A HARSH FACE TOWARDS THOSE IN NEED OF AID. OFFICIAL FOREIGN OFFICE "GUIDELINES" WERE ONLY SLIGHTLY LESS NEGATIVE.

2. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE U.S. PROCESSED NEARLY 100,000 REFUGEES THROUGH ON TWO BASES IN THE PHILIPPINES WITHOUT HINDRANCE, WE HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO ASSERT TITLE FOR ALL VIETNAMESE AND CAMBODIAN SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT ARRIVING HERE, AND WE HAVE FLOWN SEVERAL OTHER AIRCRAFT THROUGH HERE EN ROUTE TO THE UNITED STATES. VOLUNTEERS FROM PHILIPPINE ORGANIZATIONS HAVE HELPED WITH THE CARE AND FEEDING OF REFUGEES AT THE BASES, ENTERTAINERS HAVE PERFORMED FREE OF CHARGE, THE BOY SCOUTS OFFERED HELP, THE ARCHBISHOP GAVE A MASS AND DONATED THE COLLECTION TO HELP THE REFUGEES.

3. THE DISCREPANCIES IN THESE TWO PERCEPTIONS OF THE PHILIPPINE BEHAVIOR IN THIS CRISIS ARE INTERESTING AND PERHAPS ALSO INSTRUCTIVE. GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITIES WERE NOT EXACTLY UNPREPARED FOR THE REFUGEE PROBLEM. AMBASSADOR SULLIVAN HAD DISCUSSED IT WITH PRESIDENT MARCOS AND MOST OF HIS CABINET ON APRIL 25 (REF A). HOWEVER, VERY LITTLE LEADERSHIP OR DECISION-MAKING APPEARS EVIDENT IN THE ACTUAL EVENT.

4. THE NET RESULT SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN THAT A SMALL MIDDLE-LEVEL GROUP OF BUREAUCRATS, LARGELY IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES TO GIVE VENT TO THEIR GENERALLY ANTI-AMERICAN, PRO-HANOI FEELINGS AND TO MAKE QUASI-OFFICIAL PRONOUNCEMENTS AND ACTIONS WHICH CAST THE GOP IN THE MOST UNGENEROUS AND UN-CHRISTIAN LIGHT. IN THE ABSENCE OF ANY DIRECTION FROM MARCOS, AND GIVEN THE QUASI-SENILITY OF FOREIGN SECRETARY ROMULO, THEIR ATTITUDE INFORMED THE FIRST RESPONSE TO ALMOST EVERY ASPECT OF THE REFUGEE SITUATION.

5. IN EVERY INSTANCE, THEIR ACTIONS AND DECISIONS WERE
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EFFECTIVELY REVERSED BY EMBASSY APPEALS TO HIGHER AUTHORITY, EVENTUALLY TO MARCOS HIMSELF. AT THE SAME TIME, THEIR ACTIONS CAUSED CONSIDERABLE MISGIVINGS AMONG THE MORE LITERATE FILIPINOS AND TO SOME SURPRISINGLY OUTSPOKEN CRITICISM OF INITIAL GOVERNMENT NIGGARDLINESS TO THE REFUGEES.

6. ARCHBISHOP'S MASS MAY 4 IN MEMORY OF INDOCHINA SUFFER-ING REFLECTED BOTH CONCERNS NOTED ABOVE. IT WAS PROBABLY INTERLARDED AS WELL BY ANTI-COMMUNIST SENTIMENT OF ARCH-

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BISHOP AND PLEASURE SOME MAY HAVE DERIVED FROM DEMONSTRATING
OPPOSTION TO GOVERNMENT POLICY WITHIN CHURCH SANCUTARY.
FEELING OF EMBARRASSMENT HAS PERCOLATED WIDELY SINCE THEN
AMONG THE FAIRLY SMALL CIRCLE OF POLITICALLY ALERT FILIPINOS
IN MANILA. CARDINAL ROSALES HAS CARRIED POSITION OF CHURCH
CONCERN ONE STEP FURTHER BY PUBLICLY RECOMMENDING TO PRESI-
DENT THAT COMPASSION BE SHOWN TO SOME CATHOLIC CAMBODIAN
AND VIETNAMESE REFUGEES.

7. OPPOSITION AND SOME INTELLECTUALS HAVE BEEN EXCEEDINGLY
WASPISH ABOUT PRESIDENT WHO WOULD, THEY SAID, STOMP ON HELP-
LESS REFUGEES AND ALLOW PERSON (NGUYEN CAO KY) WHOM MARCOS
HAD ENTERTAINED AS PRIME MINISTER IN 1966 TO BE HARRIED
THROUGH THE PHILIPPINES. ACCORDING THEM, MARCOS HAS SULLIED
COUNTRY'S GOOD NAME AND REVEALED HIS UNRELIABILITY AS LEADER.
SALVADOR LOPEZ, FORMER U.P. PRESIDENT, SENT TELEGRAM TO PRESI-
DENT MAY 5 REMINDING HIM OF PHILIPPINE MORAL OBLIGATIONS UNDER
ARTICLE 14 OR UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS. QUOTE:
WE CANNOT SLAM OUR DOOR ON HAPLESS PEOPLE WHO ARE FLEEING
FOR THEIR LIVES AND STILL CALL OURSELVES FILIPINOS OR
EVEN HUMAN BEINGS. IF BY ELECTING TO REMAIN FILIPINO
AND HUMAN WE RISK GIVING OFFENSE TO THE NEW AUTHORITIES
IN SAIGON OR THOSE IN HANOI OR PEKING, THEN SO BE IT.
TREACHERY TO OLD ALLIES AND FRIENDS IS TOO HIGH A PRICE
TO PAY FOR THE DUBIOUS GOODWILL OF NEWFOUND ACQUAINTANCES
WHO IN THE END MAY NOT EVEN APPRECIATE THE GESTURE. IF
THERE IS A GOD OF NATIONS HE WOULD SURELY NEVER FORGIVE
SUCH PERFIDY. END QUOTE.

8. SIMILAR CONCERN OVER PHILIPPINE IMAGE HAS EMERGED
IN MILITARY. RANKING AFP CONGRATULATED AMBASSADOR SULLIVAN
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RATHER POINTEDLY AFTER HIS CORREGIDOR REMARKS (MAY 6) NOTING
THAT "CONTROVERSY EVEN EXTENDS TO PLIGHT OF HAPLESS REFUGEES
SO THAT EVEN THIS FINAL HUMANITARIAN ACT CANNOT BE CONSUM-
MATED IN DIGNITY." WE HAVE SINCE HEARD INDIRECTLY OF EX-
TREMELY BLUNT AFP CRITICISM OF PRESIDENT FOR PERMITTING
IMMATURE AND INHUMANE STAND ON REFUGEES. PERHAPS REFLECTING
THIS REACTION AND IN DEFENSE OF MARCOS, GENERAL VER HAS
REPORTEDLY INITIATED INVESTIGATION OF DFA "LEFTISTS."

9. COMMENT: PRO-AMERICAN SENTIMENT IS UNDOUBTEDLY ONE
FACTOR IN ADVERSE REACTION TO INITIAL GOP POSTURE ON EVACUA-
TION. MILITARY IN PARTICULAR WERE SENSITIVE TO FACT U.S.
WAS IN NEED OFHELP AND THEY FELT IT SHOULD BE GIVEN.
IMPORTANT AS PRO-AMERICAN FACTOR MAY BE, WE ARE IMPRESSED
AT EVEN STRONGER (AND HOPEFULLY MORE ENDURING) HUMANITARIAN
FACTOR. ALTHOUGH INTERTWINED TO SOME DEGREE WITH PRO-
AMERICAN SENTIMENT, IT HAS BEEN EMERGING-DESPITE MARTIAL
LAW STRICTURES--IN FAIRLY BROAD SPECTRUM OF LITERATE

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FILIPINOS. MARCOS NO DOUBT COULD HAVE AVOIDED THE ENTIRE ISSUE
BY HEADING ROMULO IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION BUT IN THE END, IN
RESTORING REASONABLE BALANCE, COOPERATIVENESS AND SEMBLANCE
OF GENEROSITY TO PHILIPPINE POLICY PRESIDENT HAS ACTED
IN MANNER WHICH IS NOT ONLY HELPFUL TO U.S. BUT RESPONSIVE
TO IMPORTANT SEGMENT OF FILIPINO OPINION.
SULLIVAN

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